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AFTER THE STORM: REMEMBER TO DRAIN AND COVER

Prevent mosquitoes from breeding and biting

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Martin County, FL – As cleanup efforts continue following Hurricane Irma, the Florida Department of Health and Martin County Mosquito Control remind everyone to “Drain and Cover” to keep our residents safe from mosquitoes.

“We are seeing a rise in mosquitoes above the pre-hurricane levels.” said Kylie Zirbel, Martin County Mosquito Control Manager. “Our crews are continuing inspections and ground spraying to control the populations, but we need the public’s help in this effort and encourage everyone to empty any containers that collect water.”

“Some mosquitoes carry harmful diseases and can breed in even small amounts of water,” said Karlette Peck, Health Officer for the Florida Department of Health in Martin County. “Simple precautions such as ‘Drain and Cover’ can stop the breeding and the biting.”

The public can request services from Martin County Mosquito Control by logging on to: <https://www.martin.fl.us/MosquitoControl> or calling 772-419-6974.

To protect against mosquitoes, the Florida Department of Health in Martin County urges the public to "Drain and Cover: "

DRAIN standing water:

- Drain water from garbage cans, buckets, pool covers, coolers, toys, flower pots or any other containers where sprinkler or rainwater has collected.
- Discard old tires, drums, bottles, cans, pots and pans, broken appliances and other items that aren't being used.
- Empty and clean birdbaths and pets’ water bowls at least once or twice a week.
- Protect boats and vehicles from rain with tarps that don't accumulate water.
- Maintain swimming pools in good condition and keep appropriately chlorinated. Empty plastic swimming pools when not in use.

COVER your skin with:

- **CLOTHING** - If you must be outside when mosquitoes are active, cover up. Wear shoes, socks, long pants and long sleeves.

- REPELLENT - Apply mosquito repellent to bare skin and clothing. Always use repellents according to the label. Repellents with 10-30 percent DEET, picaridin, oil of lemon, eucalyptus and IR3535 are effective.
- Use mosquito netting to protect children younger than two months old.

COVER doors and windows with screens:

- Keep mosquitoes out of your house. Repair broken screening on windows, doors, porches and patios.

Tips on Eliminating Mosquito Breeding Sites:

- Clean out troughs and gutters.
- Remove old tires or drill holes in those used in playgrounds to drain.
- Turn over or remove empty plastic pots.
- Pick up all beverage containers and cups.
- Check tarps on boats or other equipment that may collect water.
- Replace water in birdbaths and pet or other animal feeding dishes at least once a week.
- Change water in plant trays, including hanging plants, at least once a week.
- Remove vegetation or obstructions in drainage ditches that prevent the flow of water.

The department has created a public service announcement on the "Drain and Cover" method, which you can view [here](#).

Click [here](#) for our downloadable poster on preventing mosquito bites.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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